

PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION MEMORANDUM



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COMMUNIST BASE AREAS
701 AND 702
UNDERGOING CHANGE
CAMBODIA

NPIC/R-135/68
DECEMBER 1968

GROUP 1 EXCLUDED FROM
AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING
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COMMUNIST BASE AREAS 701 AND 702
UNDERGOING CHANGE

Insurgent activity in and around Base Areas 701 and 702 in northeast Cambodia is highlighted by new road and trail construction and the abandonment of Cambodian Government's strongpoints and roads.

Recent aerial photography reveals a shift in the flow of material from west-east to north-south, as indicated by the construction of new roads and trails and the abandonment of others. The new road 1/ proceeding from the tri-border area of South Vietnam has been extended 15 nautical miles (nm) south of the Tonle San (river) into Base Area 701. The northern segment of this road has been completed and vehicle tracks have been observed south to the Tonle San. In addition, a new, 45-nm north-south trail network now parallels the South Vietnam border between the Tonle San and the Tonle Srepok. Another new trail network branches southwest and joins the Tonle Srepok 20 nm to the west. North-south trails show considerably heavier usage than the existing west-east trails, many of which appear abandoned. In addition, approximately 4 nm of new north-south road construction is observed immediately north of the Tonle Srepok (Figure 1).

Another major change in Base Areas 701 and 702 is the deterioration of Cambodian roads, strong points, and villages. The eastern segments of the five major roads that extend toward the border (Routes 1944, 1941, 197, 19, and an unnumbered route) are in disuse and overgrown in many places. Road obstructions, consisting of linear ditches with associated spoil, are observed approximately 600 feet apart on several miles of the abandoned segment of Route 19. The eastern limits of serviceable Cambodian roads and active villages are depicted on the accompanying map. Military outposts, border checkpoints, and most villages appear to have been abandoned in the 15-20-nm swath that parallels the border. The abandonment of this area, unlike previous periods of inactivity, has been extended and appears to be permanent.

Previously reported insurgent activity in the two base areas has shown no apparent increase. Row crops and ground scarring are still observed in these areas, and a few new camps and defensive positions have been identified. In addition, the abandonment of some previously identified camps and defensive positions is observed. A noticeable reduction in activity is observed south of the Tonle San between Base Areas 701 and 702 where major storage areas, transshipment points, and other insurgent activity have previously been reported.

1/ NPIC/R-120/68. Ho Chi Minh Trail Linked to Insurgent Base Areas in Cambodia, October 1968 (CONFIDENTIAL/No Foreign Dissem [REDACTED])

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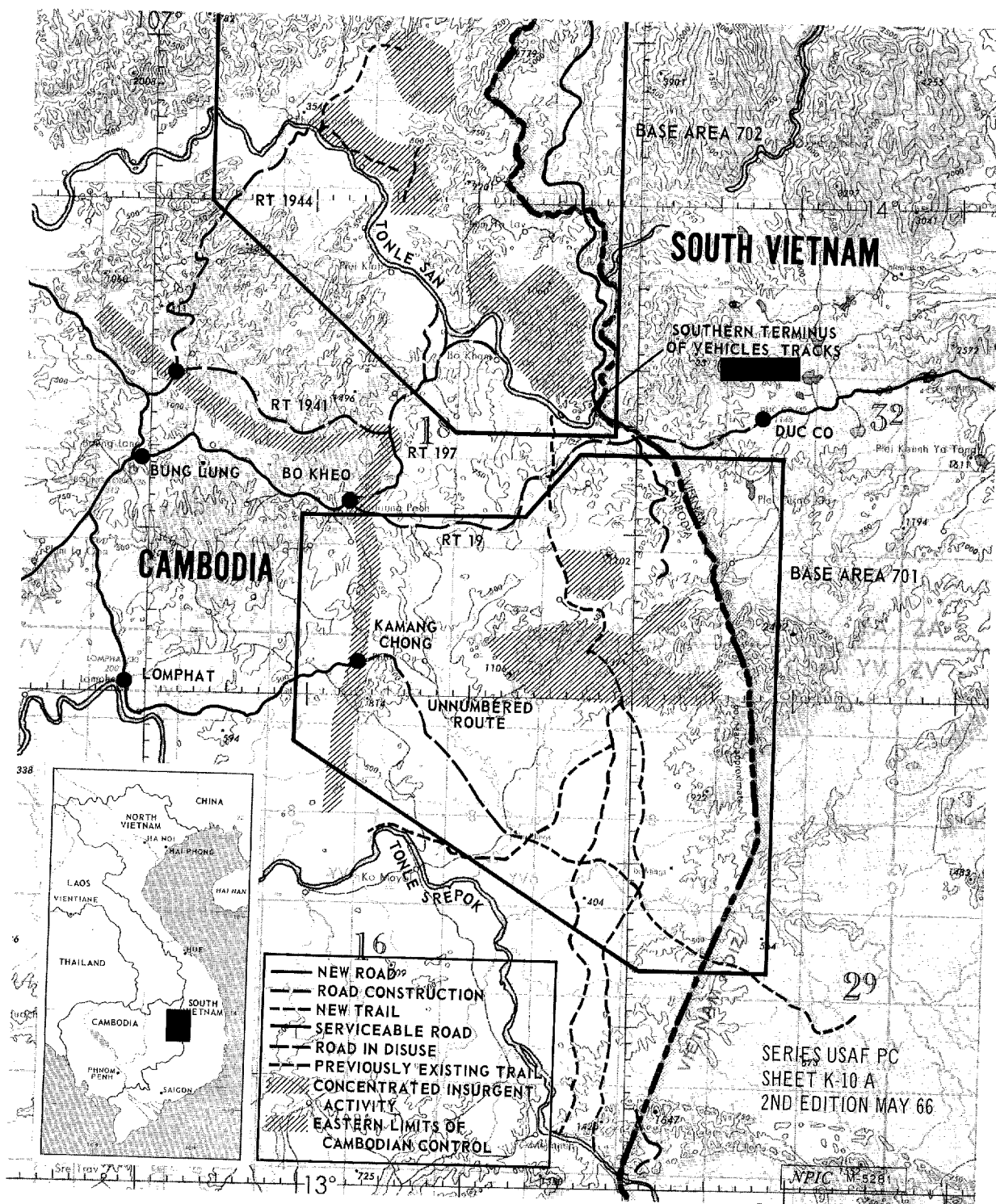
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FIGURE 1. INSURGENT ACTIVITY IN CAMBODIA

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